REMARKS

Status of the claims

Claims 1-10 are pending in the application, with claim 5 being allowable. No claims have been amended.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C.§102

Claims 1-4 and 6-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C.§102(e) as being anticipated by Tachibana et al. U.S. '357. The Examiner asserts that Tachibana et al. U.S. '357 teaches at column 7, lines 46-51, protective films (1) and (2) that are 60μm thick that vary thickness by ± 3%, such that relationship required by the instant claims of 0.85 M1<M2<1.2M1. However, Tachibana et al. does not teach or suggest two protective files that differ in thickness from each other, which are adhered to both surfaces of one polarized film, as required by the present invention. As such, Applicants traverse this rejection and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

The Examiner appears to be misinterpreting the teachings of Tachibana et al. U.S. '357 versus the instant invention. As discussed previously, claim 1 requires that the protective films on either side of the same polarizing film satisfy the relationship that the coefficients of expansion M1, M2 satisfy a formula; $0.65 \cdot M1 < M2 < 1.55 \cdot M1$. Tachibana et al. U.S. '357 fails to teach or suggest this relationship.

Applicants agree that Tachibana et al. U.S. '357 teaches a polarizing film having protective films on either side. However, when Tachibana et al. U.S. '357 refers to the variation in the thickness of the film, the reference is referring to manufacturing variations that result in a variation in the thickness across a single sheet of protective film not a total variation in thickness between the films on either side of the polarizing film. This is evident from a full reading of the reference. For example, Tachibana et al. U.S. '357 states in column 1, line 66 through column 2, line 9, that

> At present, the thickness of the polarizing plate protective film 2 is at least 80 μm, which is relatively thick.

> Recently, from the viewpoint of optical properties such as transmittance and the like, a decrease in the thickness of the polarizing plate protective film has been demanded.
>
> However, when the polarizing plate protective film having a thickness of below 80 μm is produced, it has been found that a number of wrinkles are formed in a film which is wound by the winding rolls 16 and 25 to markedly decrease the production yield.

Thus, the disclosure of Tachibana et al. U.S. '357 pertains to the manufacturing of thinner protective films for polarizing plates and overcoming the problem of wrinkling that tends to occur when the thinner protective films are manufactured. All of the examples of Tachibana et al. U.S. '357 further support this interpretation of the reference, wherein films are manufactured and the formation of wrinkles as the films are rolled is assessed. There is absolutely no disclosure or suggestion in Tachibana et al. U.S. '357 that the protective films on either side of polarizing film vary from each other in such a way that the relationship for the coefficients of expansion M1, M2 satisfy a formula; $0.65 \cdot M1 < M2 < 1.55 \cdot M1$. In addition, there is absolutely nothing in the disclosure of Tachibana et al. U.S. '357 that would indicate that this feature of the invention would even be inherently present with a polarizing filter made with the film of Tachibana et al. U.S. '357.

Even if Tachibana et al. is assumed to suggest the use of two protective films that differ in thickness adhered to both surfaces of one polarized film, the condition of M1=M2 is not necessarily satisfied as asserted by the Examiner. The coefficients of expansion of water of two protective films are not always the same if they are made from the same material but vary in thickness (see for example, Polymer Films C and D of the specification). Thus, if two protective films differ in thickness, the condition $0.65M1<M2<1.55M1$ does not necessarily fall out from that relationship and the condition $0.65M1<M2<1.55M1$ is not obvious.

As such, the instant invention as recited in the claims is in no way anticipated by or obvious over Tachibana et al. and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

As the above Remarks address and overcome the rejections asserted by the Examiner, withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested. If the

Examiner has any questions regarding the present application he is requested to contact MaryAnne Armstrong, PhD (Reg. No. 40,069) in the Washington DC area, at (703) 205-8000.

Dated: January 6, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By _____

MaryAnne Armstrong, Ph.D.
Registration No.: 40,069
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Rd
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant